A STUDY OF SELECTED INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ECO-CRITICISM

A

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Introduction:

The present study is entitled "A Study of Selected Indian English Fiction from the Perspective of Eco-criticism" puts a strong emphasis on the term Eco-criticism, which has huge importance in the recent improvement in literary criticism. The aim and scope of the present study is strong-minded and surrounded by the area of the eco-critical literature.

The word 'eco-criticism' first appeared in William Rueckert's *"Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism"* (1978). It is the study of the connection between literature and the physical environment. Nature and literature have always communal a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. At present, the intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all departments of knowledge and development. The literary critic tries to study how this close relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. In this context two terms have become very important today, ecology and eco-criticism.

It also deals with the various principles which govern such relationships between organisms and environment. At present, ecology is defined as the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship, they are so much interdependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other.

At present, eco-criticism is engaged and a readily accepted wide-reaching theory, it is also based on the following points:

i. It is the study of the link between literature and the environment.

ii. Its practitioners examine human being attitudes toward the environment as expressed in nature writing. It is an extensive variety which is well-known by many names like green cultural studies, and ecological literary criticism.

iii. It also develops the thought of "the world" to comprise the complete ecosphere. It takes an earth centered move toward to literary criticism.

iv. Eco-critics are anxious with the questions; if the nature is being symbolized in a part of writing or if in adding to race, class and gender place should become a new critical class and in what customs and to what effect the environment crisis is seeping into contemporary writing and popular culture.

v. The researcher concentrates on the questions of assessment, connotation, custom, point of view, tradition and language.

Significance of the Study:

Ecology is a typical approach to apply in literary analysis; eco-criticism provides enlarge attention to literary representatives of nature. It is perceptive to interdependencies that earth the writer, character or work in the natural system. This approach changes critical focus from social relations to natural relationships as well as views the human being as a component of ecosystem. It principles highly the literary sense of place not as surroundings but as an important appearance of linking with specific natural context. Many writers have shown interest towards nature, culture and landscape. For writers like Raja Rao landscape is the part of the theme or the characters which showed enlargement with time. Apart from this, the natural calamities that the country faced from time to time also served as themes for novels of writers like Bhabani Bhattacharya., Kiran Deasi and Amitav Ghosh. At the present phase, more works of different writers are published under movement of eco-criticism. The scope of eco-criticism is extended because of the addition of the dissimilar viewpoints that are projected by the writes around the humankind.

Review of the Related Research Literature:

A great deal of work has been done so far on various Indian English novelists in English. The main findings are regarding their style of writing and subject matter. A lot of work has been focused on portrayal of orients in literature. The researcher thought it appropriate to focus on the depiction of culture, tradition in literature, instead of

confining only to the portrayal of natural environment. The researcher has come across with the following research focusing in eco-critical study and literature.

As Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* start literary career with the publication of their fictional work, the eco-criticism starts from the very year in the form of reviews. Mostly these reviews are of the individual works. Some critics dealt with their works in general and some compared with the works of other novelists.

The purpose of the Review of the Related Literature is to take a review of the related literature. It summarized the findings and suggestions from the earlier researches in the field of the researcher in the following ways:

- It is helpful to avoid duplication and to give helpful suggestions for more research work.
- It also provides evidence that the researcher is quite familiar with the research work already done on the topic.
- It will help to provide a perspective of the problem.

It considers the previous studies done by the researchers which are related to the present study. The knowledge and information show the clear past picture of the study up to where the line of the research has come. It will also give the proper direction and guidance to the researcher so that the study can be handled with full confidence of accuracy. Only those studies that are plainly relevant, completely executed and clearly reported should be included.

One of the researchers, Kumari Shikha, in her article, 'Eco-criticism in Indian Fiction' says that environment and literature have for eternity collective a close connection as is proof in the works of novelists and other writers behind the ages in approximately every cultures of the globe. India is a nation with diversity of ecosystems which varieties from Himalayas in the north to elevate land of south and from the self-

motivated Sunderbans in the east to dehydrated Thar of the West. With time, on the other hand, these ecosystems have been unfavorably precious due to amplify inhabitants and greediness of mankind. Literature may not stay behind unchanged from this reduction and the present study is on that how the anxiety for environment revolutionizes in Indian writing from admiration to devastation.

According to her point of view, there are two apparatus of environment, organisms as well as their atmosphere are not only much multifaceted and active but also mutually dependent, equally hasty and unified. Environmental science fairly an original discipline, deals with the variety of main beliefs which rule such relations between organisms with surroundings.

From the above discussion, it is clear that though there are number of reviews related to the present study. There is no any research work focusing critically on the present topic, in a comprehensive way as the present research does. Hence, the research problem can be said as original and as pointed out in the first chapter, there is a need of conducting research work regarding the present topic.

Statement of the Problem:

Eco-criticism and Eco-critical literature confirms strongly to the process of the social, political as well as cultural independence. The Indian English novelists exhibit the local folk at large. The process of erasing out their identity by ecological rule is challenged and even people-ecological relations seem to be merging in the local scenario. The discourse of these societies has multi-layered meaning.

This crisis between four mindsets needs to be given a serious attention. Therefore, culture, language, politics, social customs, folklore and tradition provide the clues to the researcher to the very existence of the local public represented in these novels. The researcher felt it important to address this relevant question. He also wants to apply ecological tools to these texts in order to reveal their true relevance in this globalized environment.

The representation of the third world communities is a central objective, which needs to be undertaken. The way, eco-criticism has been dealt with by Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* are drastically diverse, therefore, comparison of the four will give new insights.

Aims and Objectives of the research:

The aim of the present research work is to study, identify, discuss, analyze and to interpret Eco-criticism in the novels of Raja Rao, Kiran Desai, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Amitav Ghosh and thereby to place them in the convention of Indian English novelists.

1. To study various Eco-critical aspects in the select novels in Indian English Literature.
2. To highlights on the study of the link between literature and the environment.
3. To expand the idea of globalization to encompass the whole ecosphere
4. To make an interpretation of eco-critical life.

Statement of the Hypothesis:

The Indian English Fictions like *Kanthapura*, *The Inheritance of Loss*, *So Many Hungers* and *The Hungry Tide* make known ecological aspects and present a perspective of ecological environment.

Data collection:

The data would be in the form of the primary and secondary sources.

a. Primary Sources: The Four novels of Raja Rao, Kiran Desai, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Amitav Ghosh are the Primary Sourses.

b. Secondary Sources: The reviews, articles, postcolonial works published in various journals, magazines and in the books.

Scope and Limitations:

The present study entitled **"A Study of Selected Indian English Fiction from the Perspective of Eco-criticism"** is limited to the eco-critical interpretations of these novels only. The title of this study focuses term eco-criticism which has immense significance in the recent development in literary criticism. The aim and scope of the present study is single-minded and enclosed by areas of environmental studies and eco-criticism.

Methodology:

The collected data would be in the form of the primary and secondary sources. In Primary sources, include four Indian English novels. The secondary sources consist of the reviews, articles, interviews of the writer published in various journals, magazines and books. The authentic information through internet would be used in secondary sources.

The proposed research work would depend upon the use of primary sources (the original works by the writer in question), secondary sources (as mentioned above). These works would be read, analyzed and interpreted critically in terms of postcolonial study. As the study is ecological interpretations and every novel reflects multiple eco-critical aspects, the analysis has been done strategically after stating the postcolonial aspects in every novel sequentially as prominent and secondary while analyzing the novel after giving a brief summary of the novel.

By using the descriptive method, it is employed in order to discover the ways in which these writers have presented their views on the notions of Eco-critical study by collecting the data from the selected novels. Some Indian locations are presented in their novels and are explained the needs of international or rather global perspective to be added in the methodology of the present study.

Probable Date of Completion:

This research work is proposed to be completed within the time limit as stipulated by the university.

Chapter wise Outline:

The chapter-wise outline has been given below:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter deals with the biographical survey of the Indian English writer; Raja Rao Kiran Desai Bhabani Bhattacharya and Amitav Ghosh. It also involves the four novels by them and the main and secondary themes and states briefly about the Eco-critical approach. The chapter also focuses review of literature and the other aspects related to research like justification, methodology, statement of the problem, aims and objectives and the chapter scheme.

Chapter II: Eco-critical Study of *Kanthapura*

In this chapter, Raja Rao describes the South Indian village culture and environmental setting is a true depiction of relationship between man and nature. In his novel ***'Kanthapura'***, he has shown how rivers and mountains play an important role in people's lives. In this novel they identify the mountain as Goddess Kenchamma. They also consider that it responsible for both – their prosperity and their adversity. The novelist writes about Kenchamma: *"Kenchamma is our goddess. Great and bounteous is she……never has she failed us in grief. If rains come not, you fall at her feet and say, 'Kenchamma you are not kind to us. Our field is full of younglings."* In the beginning of ***Kanthapura*** the researcher knows about the age old performs of our ancestors when nature was respected in the true truthful sense. Besides that, on the other hand, the researcher does not find any further discussions on it in the novel.

Chapter III: Eco-critical Study of *The Inheritance of Loss*

This chapter, deals with Kiran Desai's ***The Inheritance of Loss,*** spans crossways continents, mapping the outlines of the ethno-racial and chronological relationship between people from different cultures and backgrounds. The novel rebounds between rebellion in India and the immigrant experience. It presents the Azima Rachel's idea of self transplantation. The novelist crosses global boundaries and explains her character from cross-cultural eco-critical perspective. The story shifts between the landscapes of India and America. Biju, the son of an old cook in India, tries to transplant himself in a foreign land. In order to settle and have a sense of belonging to the foreign land Biju and many others like him face the similar problems like struggling for green cards, altering of jobs, look for a shelter. This transplantation is not easily established but it is only subsequent to an anxious period of time that this cross cultural incorporation is lastly a success. One more character of the novel, Jemubhai Patel who is the retired judge living in the foothills of the Himalayas. He also wants to go through the same experience when he has gone to London.

Chapter IV: Eco-critical Study of *So Many Hungers*

This chapter, Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers*, describes the great Bengal famine of 1943 at its best as well as worst. More than 30 lakh people lost their lives out of sheer hunger: no food to eat, no water to drink, no man to help them with necessary succor and no shelter either. In this novel the writer pinpoints man's dependence on nature and how nature hits back when it is threatened. One of the female characters, named, Laxmi Kanth is depicted as behaving inferior than a hungry as well as violent animal; Laxmi Kanth unkindly indulges in black bazaar activities showing no concern for the suffering civilization. Playing with human beings and playing with nature never go unanswered and in the present case nature has hit back mercilessly and severely. This fury of nature is recorded in history as the worst famine ever. Interdependence and inter-relationship between man and nature are so inter-linked that if given a slight jolt has devastated the delicate balance.

Chapter V: Eco-critical Study of *The Hungry Tide*

This chapter highlights on eco-critical study and the "relationship between physical space and literature, in *The Hungry Tide.* As all the time, evolving literary theory, eco-criticism has stretched out its scope to explore literatures from other countries around the world and bring into contact a wide variety of texts that have environmental orientation. As a result, this expansion out of national borders, concepts like eco-criticism are in discussion especially in postcolonial literatures in which the identity formation plays a crucial role. The novel, *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh, is focusing on the concept of "deterritorialization" and compare these two literary texts from different geographical locations of the world and suggest that the deaths of literary characters like Fokir in Hungry Tide might be considered both as the indication of failure of the globalization project and preservation policies by utilizing the knowledge of the local people.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

This chapter covers the conclusions drawn by the researcher covering three main points – A Study: Eco-criticism in Select Indian Fiction and their works and that of the themes in the works of some of their well-known generation; an overall crash of their eco-criticism and their specific contribution to the use of Eco-critical interpretations.

1. Eco-critical Aspects in select Indian English Fictions and that of the Ecological interpretations in the works of a number of their well-known contemporaries.

2. In general result of their eco-critical interpretations.

3. Their precise involvement to the employ of eco-critical interpretations.

These chapters will be followed by 'bibliography'.

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